new masses

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I EXECUTED MUSSOLINI

by Colonel Valerio

THE DENNIS I KNOW

by Lawrence Emery

SHOWDOWN IN CHINA

by Frederick V. Field

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just a minute

It's not enough that the old red herring has been done, well done and overdone in *Life*, *Time*, *Look*, etc., for lo these many months. Baked and half-baked, boiled and broiled, fried and dried—it's been smelling up the newsstands of the country something awful. Now it is *Newsweek* which serves up an elaborate spread of the dead fish in a recent issue. No short order this. The editors point out that they have been cooking up the mess ("Red Roundup" they call it) for more than a year.

It's the same old stuff (to come near to an old GI expression)—a big photo-and-type smear of progressive and liberal leaders of labor, the church, radio, Hollywood and Broadway, the arts, sciences and professions. A couple of Communists are included too. But there were some little items which struck us as being slightly on the novel side. For one thing this carefully documented research revealed that one of the two Communist city councilmen in New York is "Robert" Cacchione—that's news.

But what interested us most was to learn that one of the Communist "fronts" is the National Veterans' Committee. It seems that under that name the wily Reds, who "were drafted into the Army like anyone else . . . recently went to Washington to demonstrate against the Truman Doctrine." Well, we were there and it was our distinct impression that the rally was billed as the First National Encampment of Communist Veterans and we so reported it in NM (May 20). We thought it was the real thing—but it seems we can't tell a "front" from a hole in the ground.

The business ends on a rather sad note, "The main gimmick: the possibility that the public—as it did after the last war—may weary of the anti-Communist fight . . ." Well, we eventually got tired even of *Seafood Mama* and *The Three Itty Fishes*—so maybe they've got something there.

SOME people see Red with reverse English these days, too. Like Harry Tanner of Los Angeles who wrote us last week:

"Until yesterday I had felt that I could not afford a contribution to NEW MASSES. When I read, however, that Mr. William Jeffers, ex-head of the Union Pacific Railroad, in a public address here, called for concentration camps for Communists, I changed my mind. Here's my five dollars. Good luck."

Anybody else heard a vicious piece of Red-baiting lately?

WE—meaning a couple of NM editors this time—were having dinner with Dr. Harry F. Ward before going over to Webster Hall for our recent NM mass meeting. It was on Third Avenue and under the shadow of the old El—but the talk was about the wide open spaces. Dr. Ward told us about his summer place in Canada which is way out there, a long way from any railroad or town. He spoke about the furry forms of wild life in those parts, bears, deer, porcupines and skunks. The latter, it seems, are somewhat of a problem—keeping them out from under the house and out of the garden patch. He told an amusing tale of the tenseful moment one night when he awoke to find Brother Skunk prowling around in the house—under his bed. From then on it was all about that malodorous tribe and how to foil them.

Well—to get to the point—guess what we saw as we stepped inside the meeting hall. You're right: Howard Rushmore of the *Journal-American*.

Which reminds us of a little-known but rather intriguing fact about this prize Hearstling. It seems that when he was going to school back in his home state of Missouri (no reflection on that long-suffering state) he put out a little newspaper. Its name: *The Yellow Yap*.

OUR monthly Paris Letter by Claude Morgan has been widely appreciated by NM readers. We are happy to announce that beginning next week we will present a London Letter by Derek Kartun which will also be a monthly feature. Mr. Kartun is foreign editor of the London *Daily Worker*.

L. L. B.

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I EXECUTED MUSSOLINI

"I offer you an empire!" Hitler's partner told his captor. But the Blackshirt legions were gone. Justice—and death—came for the cringing Duce.

By COLONEL VALERIO (Walter Audisio)

I SHOT Mussolini in the line of duty. As he died, I felt neither hatred nor elation, neither pride nor sympathy. When it was over—but only then—a feeling of deep peace came over me. I had carried out my orders: Mussolini was dead. My job was done.

He did not die bravely. He died on his knees, insane with fear.

We were at the Palazzo Brera, main headquarters of the Volunteers of Freedom, military arm of North Italy's National Committee of Liberation (NCL), when we received news that Mussolini had been captured. This came in a phone call made from Menaggio at 8:30 in the evening of April 27, 1945, by the commander of the Treasury Guards. From that moment we did not leave headquarters. We awaited further details. We received two further messages of confirmation from the Treasury Guards, one at 11:30 that same evening, the other at 1:20 in the morning. These messages gave us a fairly coherent picture of what had happened.

A column of Nazis and Italian Fascists had been arrested about eight in the morning of April 27 by the 52nd Brigade of the Garibaldi Partisans on the road between Musso and Dongo. In this column was Mussolini, hidden in a German tank, a fact which the Partisans did not know beforehand. As they were searching their prisoners, Mussolini jumped down from the tank and took refuge in a German truck, where he hastily donned the uniform of a master-sergeant in the Nazi Luftwaffe. Then he hid under a pile of blankets, coats and knapsacks, attempting to elude the Partisans' search. Upon being discovered, he complained to the latter in these words: "The Germans tried to smother me under this pile of blankets and coats."

The Partisans brought Mussolini and his mistress, Clara Petacci, to a peasant's hut at Bonzanigo near Dongo. Fifty other Italian Fascists were caught in the same haul.

That whole night the high command was in continuous session. At 1:20 in the morning I received my orders. I was to proceed to Dongo and there carry out Decree Number 5. This decree had been issued by the National Committee of Liberation on April 25, the day on which the Partisans openly declared their revolt and the National Committee became the spokesman in North Italy of the Rome government. The decree provided the death penalty for Fascist leaders.

I was not told which of the fifty-one prisoners of Dongo was to suffer the death sentence. It was left for me to decide. I had twenty-four hours ahead of me to carry out my mission. During the next twenty-four hours, one single thought filled me: to carry out my mission as quickly as possible and not to be held up by any obstacle.

When I left headquarters, I carried on me my Partisan papers as well as a safe-conduct pass in English signed by Captain E. Q. Daddario, who had arrived in Milan that very evening on behalf of the American military mission. This note read as follows: "Milan, April 28, 1945: Colonel Valerio (also known as Magnoli Giovani Battista Di Cesare) is an Italian officer belonging to the high command of the Volunteers for Freedom. He is on a mission on orders of the North Italy Committee, in Como and the province of Como. He is authorized to move about freely with his armed escort."

I took particular care in choosing the members of my armed escort—thirteen tried Partisans of Lombardy, all of them skillful, brave and disciplined men. In the high command's auto park I chose a black Fiat, had new tires put on it, filled it with gas and checked the motor. To accompany me I chose a truck belonging to the electric light company.

A last-minute check of information on Fascist troop movements in the region and the probable time of arrival of the Allied advance parties, who were near at hand, yielded very few new and accurate details. But all information seemed to agree that the Allies would get to Milan in the course of the day.

I examined my Sten tommygun and the Guernica revolver which I had captured from a Fascist lieutenant-colonel. My arms seemed in perfect condition. A little before dawn, in a

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cool and misty morning that seemed to forecast rain, we left Milan and headed north.

My thirteen comrades did not have the slightest idea what they were going to have to do. Not until we left did I take their leader to one side and explain to him the purpose of our mission. He received the news with joy. To the others I merely declared: "I hope that you will not have to intervene militarily. But if that is necessary, I know that I can count on you." They listened in silence. Everything was running smoothly.

HEAVEN only knows what thoughts went around in my head that rainy morning as we rode along the dreary road to Como. I had never seen Mussolini. I had spent five years of his rule in prison and as a deportee for political activity. I must have asked myself a number of questions about the man: What would he look like? What would he say? How would he accept death? But of the trip I only remember my fear of losing time, my pressing desire to go faster and faster, my resolve not to allow any obstacle to block my path, my determination not to make any mistakes; for the enemy could easily outnumber us and spies might too quickly learn our secret.

Drenched and shivering with cold, we got to Como about eight in the morning. The town was in an uproar. We stopped in front of the prefecture and went inside the building without losing a minute. The local leaders of the NCL greeted us in a pompous and somewhat embarrassed manner.

"We've come about the Fascist leaders arrested at Dongo," I told them.

"They are to be taken to Como tomorrow," someone replied.

"I have higher orders concerning them," I asserted. "I need a closed, heavy truck to transport my men."

Indecision seemed to paralyze them. On their faces and in the sound of their voices I read fear and uncertainty, reflecting the oppressive shadows of the past. They retired behind closed doors to discuss the matter. The minutes passed slowly. I called Milan on the phone. I got confirmation that my task took precedence over any local decision that would be made.

We waited two hours. At 11:20 they brought us a dirty and dilapidated old truck. I demanded another one. After another wait that seemed to last for hours, an ambulance-car arrived. Seized with anger, my nerves on edge, I asked to see the local president of the NCL. Around noon I saw the president, Oscar Sforini, and the local commander, Casimo de Angelis.

I gave up all hope of getting a truck. I commandeered two passenger cars. My men piled in, some of them standing on the running-boards. I took Sforini and de Angelis with me so that I could pass the road-blocks set up by the Partisans without being held up.

Just as we were leaving Como, the whole city seemed gripped with frenzy. I learned later that at that very moment the first Allied troops had entered the city. "Faster, Barba, faster!" I shouted to my chauffeur. We had so little time before us. Now my men were in a state of nervous tension and happy excitement.

Luck intervened in our favor. A big, fast truck was about to pass us. We commandeered it without further ado. Everyone on board and let's go! No sunshine, but our hearts leaped with joy. We passed road-blocks without stopping. "The truck of the people's justice has no time to stop!" I shouted to the men standing guard.

At the approach to Dongo, only six miles from the border, an enormous tree trunk blocked the road, guarded by Partisans of the 52nd Garibaldi Brigade. We presented our papers, the tree trunk was lifted, and we were able to go on our way.

At 2:10 in the afternoon we entered the main square of Dongo. Partisans guarding the City Hall aimed their rifles at us. I presented my papers to Pedro, the local leader of the Garibaldi Brigade, and explained my mission to him. "I have orders from the high command to bring the Fascist criminals to justice," I said. He uttered a sigh of relief. He had received other orders concerning the prisoners, but he knew he had to comply with orders coming from a higher body. He handed me the list of fifty-one prisoners.

So now I was in a position to carry out my mission in accordance with the very terms of Decree Number 5, which stated: "Members of the Fascist government and Fascist leaders, guilty of having wiped out the people's freedoms, of having created fascism, of having compromised and betrayed the country's future, and who have brought it to its present disaster, are punishable with death and, in less serious cases, with life imprisonment. During the emergency period courts-martial will exercise the judiciary function. . . ."

I constituted the local command as the court-martial. In the list of fifty-one, I singled out seventeen leaders as chiefly responsible, and they were condemned to death. Mussolini was among them. Clara Petacci was not on that list.

I ORDERED Pedro to bring the condemned men to the City Hall in Dongo. I said I would go in person to Bonzanigo.

Accompanied by Guido and the local commissar of the 52nd Brigade, I set out at 3:10 for Bonzanigo and—Mussolini. En route between Mezzegra and Bonzanigo, I chose the spot for the execution—a curve in the road, a closed gate leading to an orchard and, in the background, an abandoned house. I did not tell anyone about my choice. A few yards further I stopped, raised the safety-catch of my automatic and tried it. The gun worked beautifully.

We continued along the road in silence. "You want me to tell you something, Guido?" I said suddenly. "Do you know what we're going to do? We're going to tell him we have come to free him."

Guido snorted: "He's no fool. He won't swallow that."

"You'll see," I replied. "I'm sure he'll swallow it!"

I don't know why I got that idea. Perhaps it would make him come out of the house more easily. Maybe, too, in the depths of my being, I wanted to see and know the real worth of that man. . . . Could I, a simple human being, fool the man who claimed to be a giant, an empire-builder?

The little country house was on the slope of a hill. I spoke to the Garibaldi sentinels and went into the hut alone. At last, I was to be face to face with the fallen dictator. Would he smile? Would he weep? Would he face his fate with dignity or like a coward? I remembered the story I had just been told: his last act as a "great" leader. When the Partisans had questioned him after his capture, one of them ordered him to put down in writing the details of his capture. Calmly he took a pen and wrote:

"The 52nd Garibaldi Brigade captured me today, Friday, April 27, on the central square of Dongo."

"Now write that you have been mistreated and left to die of hunger," the Partisan ordered sarcastically.

Mussolini took up the pen again.

"During and after my capture," he added, "I have been treated correctly."

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Then he signed his name: "Mussolini."

But I discovered no trace of dignity in the terrorized face, in the creature shaken by nervous spasms I saw before me.

I had entered the room wearing the khaki uniform of a Partisan, a tricolor emblem on my *kepi*, the three stars of a Partisan colonel on my breast, my tommygun out, my revolver at my side. Mussolini was standing at the right of the narrow bed, his face unshaved, dressed in his Fascist uniform. He looked at me with the eyes of an animal at bay. His lower lip quivered. He could hardly pronounce his words as he murmured in a hoarse voice: "What's the matter?"

"I have come to free you," I said.

He did not doubt my words for an instant. "Really?" he said. And suddenly he was changed—once more an emperor, living beyond reality, rejecting the truth of history, self-possessed in his vanity, sure of his power.

I thought that I would have to kill someone great. Instead of that, how small, weak and absurd he was. So that was Mussolini!

"Where are we going?" he demanded imperiously. "Are you armed?" I asked him. "No!" he said. Then turning toward the door, he ordered: "Let's go!"

All this time Clara Petacci had remained in bed with the covers drawn up over her head. When she heard the word "free," she stuck out her head and sat up. But not once. did Mussolini look at her or say a word to her. He appeared to take no interest whatever in her, he seemed oblivious of her presence. I had to tell her: "You go first!"

She gave me a silly smile and began to fumble about in the bedclothes. "But I haven't got my underwear," she whimpered as she pulled back the covers. She was wearing a black silk dress and had nothing at all under it.

"Oh, come on!" I blurted out impatiently. "Don't make such a fuss. You're not a young girl any more."

Mussolini moved toward the door. He stepped over the threshold, then turned back toward me. Again his chin extended upward, he scowled his famous scowl, and his voice was pompously inflated. "I offer you an empire," he said to me.

In the car I sat facing both of them, my tommygun trained on them. Mussolini had grown almost affable. "They will recognize this Fascist beret," he murmured, pointing to his headpiece. "In that case, take it off," I said. He did take it off, exposing his enormous bald head. "And how about that?" he asked. "Put it on again, if you like," I said. Whatever he chose to do was all right with me.

The car went slowly down the hill. When we came to the spot I had chosen, I looked closely to see if there was anyone in the vicinity. Not a soul in sight. We were alone. I ordered the chauffeur to stop.

We got out of the car. I told Mussolini to stand up against the wall. He went in that direction, still not understanding what was up. When he turned around and faced me, I read out the sentence: "By order of the High Command of the Volunteer Corps of Freedom, my mission is to render justice to the Italian people."

We were a tiny group gathered at

When Mussolini ruled: a drawing by the Italian artist Renato Guttuso of an execution of anti-fascists.

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this deserted bend in the road: Mussolini, Clara Petacci, Guido, the Partisan official and myself. It was four in the afternoon. The air was calm, almost drowsy, as I read. "Mussolini must not die! Mussolini must not die!" Clara Petacci shrieked hysterically.

Mussolini's whole body was shaking. His lips twitched violently. He could only stammer: "But . . . but . . . Colonel . . . but . . . but Colonel. . . ."

I raised my tommygun, ready to shoot. "Get away from there, or you'll be hit too!" I shouted to the Petacci woman. She tottered to one side. I aimed, pressed the trigger. The gun did not go off. Again Clara Petacci ran to Mussolini, throwing her arms around him. There was not the slightest indication on his part that he was aware of her presence. She wept and screamed. He completely ignored her. Not a word crossed his lips about his mother, wife or children. Unutterable terror gripped him.

I threw down my Sten tommygun and grabbed my revolver. Clara Petacci ran to and fro, blinded by panic. "Get away from there!" I shouted, aiming my revolver. The gun refused to go off.

I called the Partisan official and seized his tommygun. Mussolini waited. He was limp and showed no reaction, not even the slightest desire to struggle. I aimed once more. Five bullets entered him. He sank to his knees against the wall, but he was not dead. I fired again. One bullet hit Clara Petacci, killing her instantly. Three others struck Mussolini's body, but he was still breathing. I came closer to him and sent a bullet through his heart.

He was dead at last.

So was Clara Petacci. She had not been condemned to die, but was dead just the same. "Good," I reflected as if in a far-off mist, "one guilty person less."

I felt no disgust, only weariness, a vast calm, and a deep sense of relief. I had done my duty. I left two men to stand guard over the corpses and went back to Dongo to carry out the sentence against the sixteen other condemned Fascists. Once this was done, we came back to get the bodies and placed them on our truck. At eight in the evening we started back on the road to Milan. Our mission had been accomplished in the time set.

The orders of the high command had been to bring the bodies back to Piazza Loreto in Milan, the famous square where, on April 14, 1944, fifteen Partisans had been murdered in front of a gasoline pump. The place we had picked to exhibit Mussolini's corpse had not been chosen at random.

On the road to Milan we met the first American tank. The Allied vanguard had arrived. I showed the safe-conduct pass signed by Captain Daddario and we were able to continue on our road.

We got to Milan very late that night. I called headquarters on the phone to inform Lieutenant-Colonel Pieri: "Mission performed, according to orders received." He congratulated me and asked me to come to headquarters to make my report as quickly as possible.

At three in the morning we got to Piazza Loreto with the corpses and dumped them on the square. I felt a new sense of peace envelop my heart. For me the pacification of the human spirit began that night on Loreto Square, which since then has borne the name of "Justice Square."

(*Translated by John Rossi.*)

DAYS WITH EUGENE DENNIS

Those were stirring times in Southern California. I saw this young man of courage stand tall in the fight for free speech, for labor's rights.

By LAWRENCE EMERY

The trials have begun. Regardless of its mealy-mouthed apologia, the government is prosecuting those in the dock for their ideas: some because they insisted on aiding the refugees of Republican Spain, others because they work for Soviet-American friendship in peace as well as in war, still others because they vigorously defend the Bill of Rights. Another, Gerhart Eisler, is attacked because, at the risk of his life, he opposed Hitler as a Communist in the German anti-fascist underground. Among those on trial is Eugene Dennis, general secretary of the Communist Party. Millions heard the libels on him by the Un-American Committee, and by this time many know the worth of J. Parnell Thomas' word. In the article below we present a chapter of Dennis' life as told by someone who really knew him.—THE EDITORS.

NEARLY twenty years ago on a warm Sunday morning I hitchhiked the twenty miles from San Pedro to Los Angeles to attend a conference of Communist Party functionaries. The Party at the time was weak and torn by the bitter factionalism of Jay Lovestone and his followers. The fantastic American boom of the late Twenties was reaching its incredible peak; within a short time the boom was to burst, and the collapse was going to shake the country from Point Concepcion to Cape Hatteras, from Park Avenue to every back alley in the land. But Lovestone insisted that America had freed itself from the inevitability of explosive crises, and on the basis of that theory he personally was going to run the Communist Party or ruin it.

At the conference a tall, rangy, curly-haired young man delivered a report in which he declared that Lovestone would do neither. He insisted that destructive factionalism must come to an end and that the Party must unite and turn its attention to the positive matter of defending and promoting the interests of the labor movement. This was of particular importance at the moment, he said, in view of the fact that capitalism in America was still subject to the laws

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Have you written to Tom Clark?

By the time we go to press, our associate editor Howard Fast and sixteen of his colleagues of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee will have gone on trial in Washington for contempt of Congress. They comprise a group of outstanding citizens of heart and vision who are being hounded by the Un-American Committee because they refused to forget the transcendant services to mankind of Republican Spain; they have been aiding the Republican refugees and their children, trying in whatever way possible to repay in some measure that debt all of us owe the Loyalist Spaniards.

We shall in later issues have more to say about them all, about Americans like Dr. Edward K. Barsky who volunteered his great surgical skill and his deep humanity to the Loyalist government during their war. In this space we want particularly to say a few words about Howard Fast, our colleague and one of America's foremost writers. We urge every honest American to consider his case thoughtfully, for in Fast we find the embodiment of the artist who has put his talents at the services of the people, of democracy, of our nation.

Fast is a people's writer; few can gainsay that. A young man in his early thirties, he has already risen to eminence as a tribune of the poor, the oppressed, the millions of common men who mean it when they say Liberty, Peace, Humanity. Nor are these mere words in capital letters to Fast. His works reveal the man. No American writer has so well evoked our great national heroes, so magically raised them from the past to walk among us. Millions who have read Fast's books have brooded with Washington, bled at Valley Forge, shared Tom Paine's dream, fought with Gideon Jackson along Freedom Road, risen to moral eminence with Altgeld.

Emerson would have loved Fast, Whitman would have shaken his hand, wagged his great gray head approvingly at this young writer who emerged from the slums of New York to become a fearless champion of America's common man. For this he is already loved by millions—and hated by the venomous few who sit at the controls of our nation. The man who persecutes Fast is the man who spurns the tradition of Jefferson, who totes the rope and faggot for Gideon Jackson.

We who work with Fast on New Masses know this man, big with energy, talent, heart. We feel he carries within him the heritage of our people. We love his enthusiasm, his will, his drive against injustice wherever it is to be found. There is that about him which reminds you of the man who exclaimed: "Where liberty is not, there is my home."

Yes, they will do their damndest to get Howard Fast; they have sniped at him in the gutter press, in the New York Board of Education for his book on Paine. And now they are trying to put him behind bars.

They tried that yesterday with Thoreau, with Gorky, with Dreiser. And whose names are remembered today?

Joseph North.

of capitalism, and that the country could not escape the world economic crisis which was already making itself felt in other lands. The tall young speaker was Gene Dennis, and that report was one of the first he ever made to a meeting of leading Communist workers.

It was almost impossible to stay out of jail in Southern California in those days. The Police Department of Los Angeles had a well-staffed Red Squad which, whatever else might be said of it, *worked* for its wages. It was probably the busiest and most active group of cops in the country at the time, and its members put in a lot of overtime. There was even a special little Red Squad in San Pedro, which occupied itself with periodic night raids on the headquarters of the Marine Workers Progressive League, for which I was an organizer, and with trying to prove that we could not get up on a street corner in San Pedro and make a speech. We were just as insistent in trying to prove that we could get up on a street corner and make a speech, and for one long stretch during that contest a group of us spent every weekend in the Los Angeles City Jail. (I believe that today it is possible to get up on a street corner in San Pedro and make a speech.)

Once Dennis and I managed to get ourselves into the same jail at the same time. Yetta Stromberg, a member of the Young Communist League, had been arrested while in charge of a children's summer camp near Yucaipa, and California justice was intent on sending her to prison for ten years. As part of the campaign to free her, we decided to hold a defense rally in San Bernardino, the largest town near the camp. Dennis was to be chairman of the rally and Yetta Stromberg was to be the principal speaker. We received word that the San Berdoo police and the hoodlum wing of the local American Legion were set either to prevent the meeting entirely or to break it up if it got under way. A group of seamen from San Pedro went along on the night of the meeting as a sort of bodyguard for Yetta, who was about five feet tall and hardly big enough to defend herself against a bunch of roughnecks.

We arrived in San Berdoo early to look over the situation, and as soon as we entered town it was obvious that the Law and Order boys would be out in full force. The main street, where we intended to speak, was already crowded and there was a tension that had been worked up deliberately by a vast amount of publicity, most of it to the effect that "the Reds will never speak here!"

Our group went into a restaurant and considered the situation. The idea of abandoning the speaking project entirely was discussed: the streets were filling rapidly now with large crowds, great numbers of Legionnaires with their caps were stationed on the main corners, and the entire police force was out. It was obvious that our small group would scarcely be able to hold a

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meeting with every force in the community mobilized to prevent it. The least that could be expected was a speedy arrest; we preferred not to think about the worst that could happen. But Dennis insisted that the effort be made. The case against Yetta Stromberg was a particularly flagrant violation of basic human decency and the most elemental principles of freedom, and we had come there to combat it.

Our group split up so that if arrests were made, not all of us would land in jail. Several seamen were assigned to stay with Yetta and to keep her out of sight. If we managed somehow to get a meeting going, she would speak; if not, she was to be kept away from the police and taken back to Los Angeles.

We carried a folding chair with us and set it up on one of the main intersections where the crowd was thickest. Someone shouted, "Here they are!" and the crowds surged toward us from both directions until the street was packed tightly and solidly from building line to building line. The police began shouldering their way through to us. Without hesitation Dennis clambered upon the chair but he had scarcely uttered his opening sentence before the cops had charged through. They dragged him from the chair and hauled him away. One of the seamen with us was so outraged at this behavior, which we had all expected, that he leaped upon the chair and began an angry denunciation of this interference with the freedom of speech. The cops hauled him down and took him off to jail. The enormous crowd, which had been mustered in such huge proportions by the threats that had been made against the Reds, was impressed first by the cool courage of Dennis and then by the instinctive defiance of the seaman, and there was a scattering of involuntary applause even from those who had come to watch the Reds "get theirs."

Nothing would be gained by more arrests from that chair, so a small group of us slipped away from the corner and went into a lunch counter. We ordered coffee and considered what to do next. There were several small hotels on the main street, and we decided to try to rent a front room in one. If we succeeded, we were to get Yetta into it, barricade the door, and let her speak from the window. But as we started out of the lunch room we saw the police obviously waiting for us. Someone who had seen us with Dennis had pointed us out. We hesitated and were about to look for a rear exit when the cops entered and placed us under arrest on the spot. We held no meeting in San Bernardino that night, unless we count the one we conducted for ourselves in the San Pedro lock-up. We had the place all to ourselves: several men held for vagrancy had been given their freedom when we came in, presumably on the theory that it would have been dangerous to subject them to our influence.

We were released on bail the next morning, and we eventually stood trial on violation of a local ordinance, and most of us were acquitted. But Yetta Stromberg never went to prison.

THE stock market crashed in 1929, as the Communists, almost alone, had predicted. The turbulent days of mass unemployment began, and the police terror in Southern California increased. Dennis was active in all the great struggles that were fought in that period.

He paid a good deal of attention to our work in San Pedro; with the establishment nationally of the Trade Union Unity League, the Marine Workers Progressive League had become the Marine Workers Industrial Union, a forerunner of the militant organizations that exist today. More and more seamen were joining, and employer opposition was increasing. Raids on our headquarters were becoming more frequent, and some of us were spending more time than ever in jail for our activities. The seamen who had become active in the union were not only blacklisted by all the ship lines, but guards were posted at the hiring hall—the Fink Hall, as it was known—to bar us from the place. A frenzied agent in the Industrial Employment Office even drove me out of there with a loaded shotgun once; that was the atmosphere of Pedro as men piled up on the beach and hunger took over.

Dennis then was the regional secretary of the Trade Union Unity League and lived in San Pedro for a time. He once took a job driving an ice-truck, and frequently I would spend an afternoon with him on the truck, discussing our work among the seamen and longshoremen as he delivered fifty- and one hundred-pound chunks of ice to kitchen ice-boxes.

Dennis in those years was one of the most self-assured young men I have ever known. We were both in our twenties; he had already married

portside patter

By BILL RICHARDS

Scientists reveal that there are thirty germ weapons suitable for warfare, ranging from pneumonic Black Plague to germs causing the common cold. The discouraging factor is that the best counter-agent developed thus far is *"gesundheit!"*

●

A Congressman wants diplomatic entertainment allowances cut on the grounds that it is "all spent on liquor anyway." It seems that diplomats should be economical but not tight.

●

A poll of Germans in the British zone reveals that Churchill is the most popular man living. It is generally realized that this splendid victory was made possible only by Hitler's suicide.

●

Goering's wife is facing trial as a Nazi profiteer. She will probably blame it on her late husband, claiming she was merely living off the fat of the land.

●

Congress has passed the Taft anti-labor bill. Many a Congressman will answer in '48 for passing when he should have kicked.

●

The citizens of Boulder City have voiced belated objections to the recent act of Congress which honored Hoover for something in which he had no part. They point out that Herbert just never gave a dam.

●

Bilbo, awaiting a third operation, wants the doctors to fix him up so he can "eat and talk." The happy solution would be to fix him up so he eats nothing but his own words.

●

Henry Luce is visiting South America this month. Optimists in Washington believe that the Good Neighbor policy may survive this latest setback.

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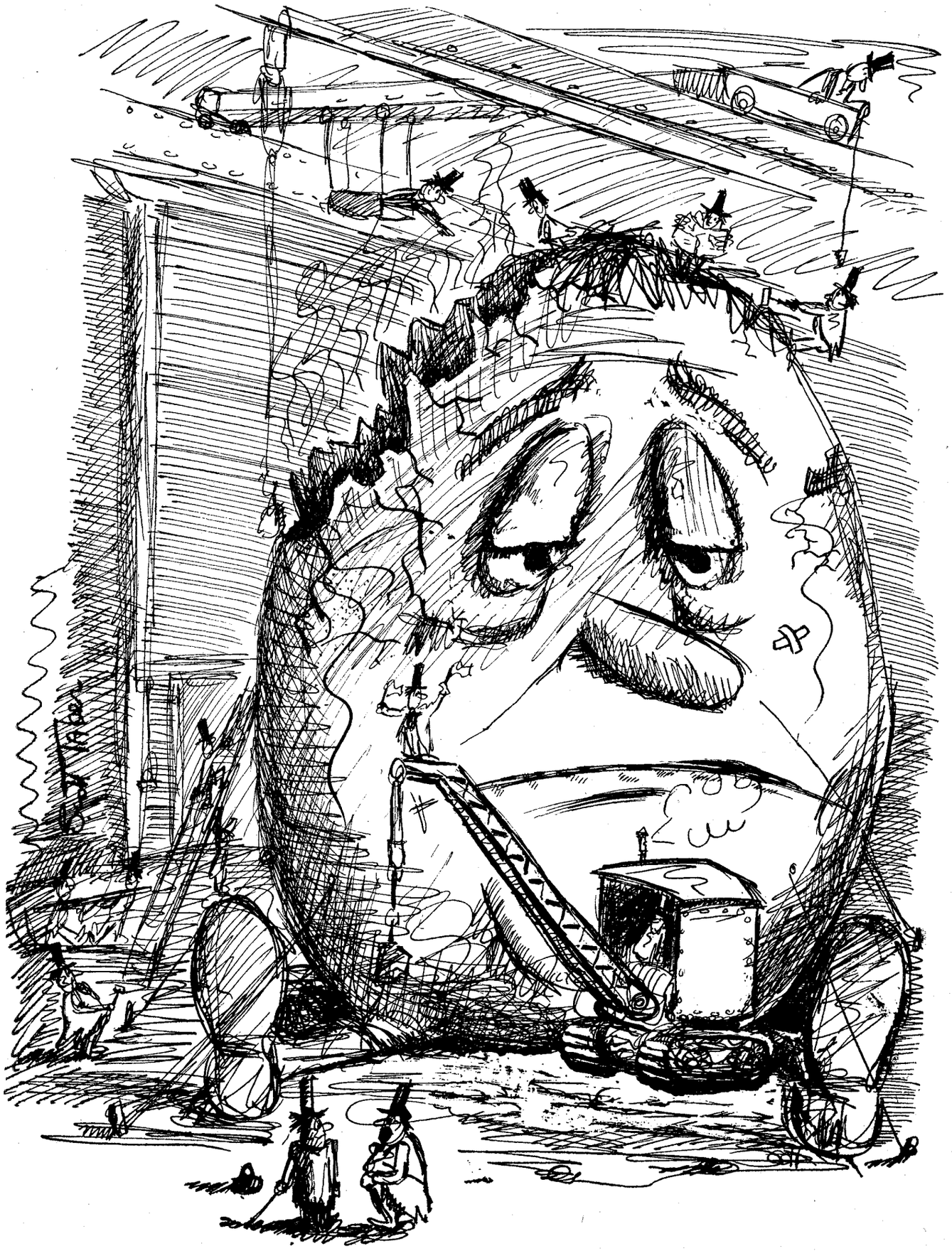

"Any signs of a recession, Doc?"

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and he and his wife were living out on the Point, and I went there often to have dinner with them. He knew then, with a surety that was something more and beyond mere confidence, that his life in its entirety was devoted to the cause of the Communist Party and that that cause could not fail. As young men will in all times, we talked often of our hopes for the future. But Dennis, unlike most other young men, did not romanticize his dreams of a new and better world. He saw that new world then as a life-time goal, and he knew the road to it would be compounded of hard work and tireless effort and persistent struggle. And he was already so thoroughly committed to that as his object in life that it is unlikely the idea of any alternative course of action ever crossed his mind.

While Dennis was living on the Point, a long, cliff-ended abutment into the sea, the outermost section of it cracked away, leaving a wide and seemingly bottomless chasm. The whole area was fenced off and condemned as unsafe. One night Dennis and I walked out and looked at this cleavage in the earth, and we knew that nothing, nothing at all, is ever fixed in everlasting immobility.

SHORTLY after that many things happened, and happened rapidly. Dennis and his wife moved back to Los Angeles, where he became active in the great unemployment movement of those days. Down in the Imperial Valley thousands of Mexican and Filipino agricultural workers were stirring in revolt against intolerable conditions and walked out in a spontaneous, unorganized strike. Dennis went into the Valley to give leadership to this movement and once was held in jail for eight days, but no charges were pressed against him. Later others of us went into the Valley to organize an agricultural workers' union. Dennis from Los Angeles was active in that struggle, both in mobilizing support in Los Angeles for the men in the fields and in frequent assistance in mapping tactics and strategy.

When a second strike was planned, the terror closed in. The Valley became an armed camp barred to "outside agitators" and those of us who were down there were arrested and railroaded to prison terms on charges of Criminal Syndicalism. It was a long time before I saw Dennis again.

But in San Quentin we managed to smuggle in some of our own literature, and eventually, in the pages of the old *International Press Correspondence*, I found several articles from the Philippines. They were written by Gene Dennis. I thought at first that he was a long way from home. Then I remembered that he was at home wherever there was a struggle for freedom to be waged.

The Un-American Committee will find that Dennis is the kind of a man who can't be stopped.

BIG TRAIN

LISTEN to the rumble. It's the big Wallace Train ploughing through the country—Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, Minneapolis, Denver, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Austin, Raleigh, Newark—carrying a freight of wisdom and hope. Men of evil heart listen to that rumble with fear and hate, but to millions of ordinary folk it is the sound of a new day thrusting out of the darkness.

The "practical" men, the bipartisan cynics and traducers of the Roosevelt heritage, thought they had buried the name of Henry Wallace when they turned him out of the Cabinet. When Europe's peoples hailed his attack on the Truman Doctrine and his plea for cooperation with the Soviet Union, the bipartisan gargoyle reviled him as a prophet without honor in his own country. But now the Wall Street crowd and their political valets are worried. Twenty-two thousand at Chicago, thirty thousand at Los Angeles, tens of thousands in other cities have responded to the Wallace message and have begun to cry: "Wallace in '48!"

Former Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes—no friend of Wallace's—writes: "My own analysis of the undoubted and widespread enthusiasm which has attended Mr. Wallace is that the people are looking for leadership. More than this, they are looking for leadership that has at least an appearance of ideality. They are looking for leadership with courage. . . . The people just do not have the confidence in President Truman to which the 'Missouri Gang' and its camp-followers have been hoping that he could attain." (New York *Post*, June 2.)

And those fervent administration apologists, Joseph and Stewart Alsop, report (New York *Herald Tribune*, June 2) that "the increasing threat of a third party headed by Henry Agard Wallace" is a major factor helping to swing the balance in favor of a Presidential veto of the Taft-Hartley anti-labor bill.

Of course, meetings and enthusiasm by themselves are not enough to launch a new party or an independent Presidential ticket in 1948. Yet they indicate a ripening of sentiment beyond even the most optimistic expectations. The results in the special Congressional election in Washington State point the same way: former Rep. Charles R. Savage, a Wallace supporter, despite sabotage of his campaign by the Democratic politicos, missed election by only about 1,500 votes, in contrast to his defeat by 7,000 votes last fall.

The Wallace trip underlines the opportunities that exist. But the time for taking advantage of them is growing perilously short. This is a battle not merely for an effective part in an election but for a new people's movement to save our country from becoming what Germany became and dragging us all to incalculable disaster. The job is to build now independent organization in every community, to rouse the trade unions into political action against the bipartisan cabal responsible for the Taft-Hartley bill, to strengthen progressive influences in the Democratic Party, and to coordinate all these in a broad coalition.

One of the effects of the Wallace trip has been to bring to the fore Progressive Citizens of America, which sponsored several of his meetings. That too helps advance a new realignment. As for Mr. Wallace, he evidently has no intention of "behaving" and has already announced he won't support Truman for reelection. He has learned much in recent weeks. Out of this trip might well come, in my opinion, a closer attention to domestic issues on which his leadership is no less needed than on foreign policy.

A. B. MAGIL.

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SHOWDOWN in CHINA

Democracy is winning over Chinese and American reaction. The strategy of the people's armies.

By FREDERICK V. FIELD

For those with eyes to see, the Truman Doctrine was given its strongest blow in China even before it was formally announced last March. To millions of Chinese upon whom a civil war has been forced the name by which the American policy is known is of little importance. Whatever it is called, the things that count to the Chinese are the American bullets which shoot them down—bullets fired from American guns aimed by Kuomintang soldiers trained by American officers.

Many Americans have failed to see the close relationship between events in China (and in the Philippines, Korea and Japan too) and what the Truman Doctrine seeks to impose upon the people of Europe. They have also failed to see an uninterrupted sequence of events in American imperialist intervention in China and the new direct intervention in Greece and Turkey. There is a tendency to regard the Truman Doctrine as a new policy rather than as another phase of an old policy. There is an unfortunate political habit of keeping Washington's actions in the Far East in a separate compartment from Washington's activities in Europe. It was, therefore, not widely appreciated that the people of one of the largest countries of the world had risen against the Truman Doctrine and were making a shambles of it even before US imperialism was given a fancy name.

The decisive events in China have for some months been military. The great masses of China did not choose this way; nor did the Chinese Communists, who give the country democratic revolutionary leadership. Neither did the Democratic League, Chinese intellectuals and students, farmers and small merchants, choose a solution by civil war. The choice was imposed upon them by Chiang Kai-shek and his Kuomintang dictatorship. And Chiang could make such a choice only because he had substantial military support from Washington as well as unlimited political encouragement and a confident expectation of more.

The die was cast in favor of a war of extermination against China's democratic elements (under the guise, of course, of anti-communism) immediately after V-J Day. Chiang Kai-shek's military campaign in the fall of 1945 was inspired by America's firebrand ambassador, Patrick J. Hurley. It was a flop. Chiang gained nothing and lost both prestige and several divisions. Hurley was replaced by General Marshall, who arrived with a dove of peace perched on his shoulder and in his pockets lend-lease, surplus military property, instructors and loans. Marshall made a large contribution to Chiang's desperate need of a breathing spell to reorganize and reequip his troops. As umpire of China's then undeclared civil war Marshall called all the strikes on the Communists and deftly moved Chiang's armies around China's bases. The American general surrounded himself with such an aura of sanctity that his decisions in China could no more be challenged than can the umpire's at Ebbetts Field.

The Kuomintang gained ground during this period. They had the active support of some 70,000 US Marines, 1,500 American military instructors, an American naval fleet, several hundred American planes, American transportation and air reconnaissance, and $4,000,000,000 worth of military and transport equipment. But while Chiang made gains, he failed to exterminate his democratic opposition. He did not even seriously injure it. On the contrary, Chinese democracy emerged stronger than ever. American intervention solidified the opposition to the Kuomintang.

Chiang's American advisers (of whom he was virtually a puppet) counselled a longer breathing spell. American military instructors had not finished the job of training Kuomintang divisions; American equipment had not been fully delivered or distributed; there were still those 271 American naval vessels to turn over to the Kuomintang and the problems of training Chinese crews to man them. Moreover, arrangements had not been completed for taking over the protection of northern lines of communication from the US Marines, whom pressure at home was forcing the Truman administration gradually to withdraw. Chiang was told by the Americans to keep the lid on for a few more months by "broadening" his government to include "liberals." This would permit Washington to continue the flow of loans and arms and would also serve to confuse and divide China's democratic elements. It might even unite the nation against the Communists! So the American emissaries thought and so they advised.

But they greatly underestimated the strength of Chinese democracy and particularly of the Chinese Communists and the armies they lead. The American diplomats thought that the Chinese intellectuals in the Democratic League would also cave in. They didn't. Second, the "liberals" whom the Americans had hand-picked—men like the present Prime Minister, Chang Chun—could not hold back the more "fanatical" of the Kuomintang crowd. The Americans could not see that such individuals were simply the other side of the same reactionary coin. You don't put down the crime wave in Chicago by bringing the Dillinger mob into the Capone gang. Finally, the Americans failed to appreciate the tightness of Chiang's political position. Further delay inevitably meant concessions to the opposition, real concessions. And concessions for a dictatorship are very dangerous risks to that dictatorship. Chiang's crowd had charted their course. It was to exterminate their opposition by civil war. There was no turning from it without accepting defeat.

For these reasons the solution for China is being found on the battlefield rather than in the legislative halls. And it is on the battlefield that

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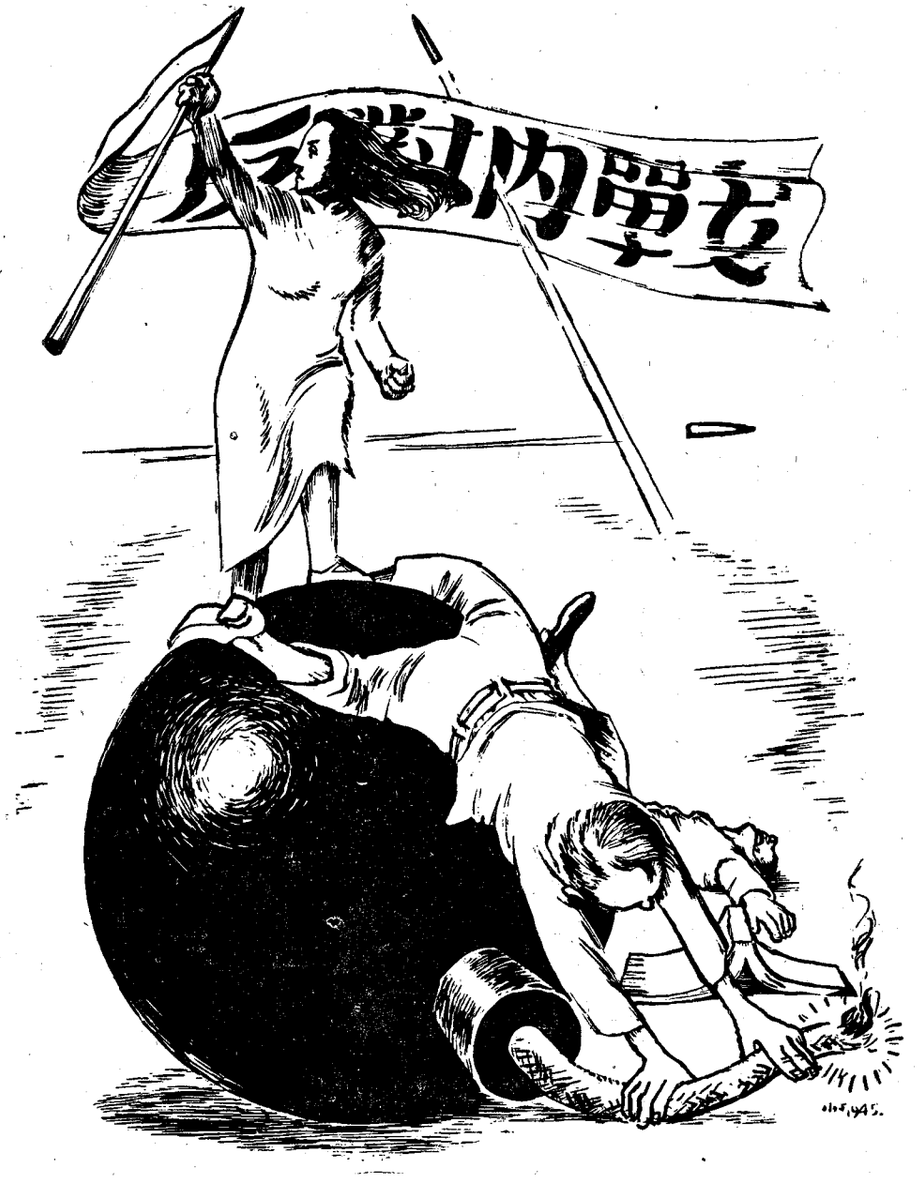

"The people cry 'Stop the Civil War,'" a cartoon by the Chinese artist Ting Tsung.

important developments have been occurring against reaction—American and Chinese.

Chiang Kai-shek's military strategy comprised three stages. The first was the occupation of strategic centers. The second was to connect these points by seizing the intervening lines of communication. The third and last step in the plan was to cut up the Communist-controlled areas into small pockets and then to exterminate them in a final mopping-up campaign.

The first stage was carried out with the direct assistance of American imperialism. Reaction to this assistance was very bad both in China and in the United States. It was therefore necessary for the Kuomintang to work on their second military stage without the same type of open military assistance from the United States. The failure of this second stage, however, was due primarily to the successful counter-strategy employed against the Kuomintang by the Chinese Communists.

The strategy of the Communist-led armies has been based, naturally enough, upon a political policy of refusing to surrender to Chiang Kai-shek's reaction and it therefore means, in military terms, crushing Chiang's offensive. To accomplish this Communist strategy was designed to draw the Kuomintang troops into their own territory. Thus the Communist-led groups would fight in friendly territory while Chiang's troops fought in hostile territory. This strategy, which has proved very successful, facilitated for the Communist-led forces the problems of intelligence and supply, at the same time aggravating these problems for the enemy. It has also had a deteriorating effect on the fighting morale of Chiang's troops.

To cope with the problem of Chiang's superior forces in terms of numbers and fire power, Communist strategy has called for the avoidance of frontal attacks, pitched battles, or the defense of the larger cities. The Communist-led armies have, instead, attacked Kuomintang troops as they approached the main centers, knocking out what they could and then withdrawing and letting the enemy occupy the city. The occupation and administration of these larger centers have cost the Kuomintang a substantial proportion of its effectives. As a result Chiang's absolute superiority in numbers dwindles to a relative inferiority for combat purposes.

The problem of fire-power has been handled in similar fashion. The Communists know from experience that the Kuomintang's semi-feudal armies cannot solve the problems of service and supply, that corruption eats the heart out of the troops, that lack of conviction makes them hesitant in combat. The Communists, trained in guerrilla tactics, cut the lines of Kuomintang communication and wreck or capture their supply trains. If the Kuomintang has placed three armies in an area, the Communists carefully engage only one of these at a time; if that one can be defeated the other two are stranded. Chiang Kai-shek, fighting to reimpose medievalism upon China, is involved in a hopeless contradiction on the battlefield. The illiteracy, ignorance and poverty which he imposes does not jibe with modern instruments and techniques of warfare.

The Communists have had a distinct advantage in two spheres of warfare: reinforcements and replacements. In order to have enough replacements Chiang has been forced to reintroduce the hated system of conscription. His new recruits don't want to leave the land, they have no enthusiasm for his civil war. Why should Chinese shoot Chinese? Consequently their fighting morale is low. Moreover, the process of draining the countryside of its manpower creates further problems for the Kuomintang. The already inefficient system of agricultural production is further upset by lack of men to till the soil and to provide the food supply—low even under normal circumstances.

THE Kuomintang is dogged by another contradiction in its obsolete economic system. To support enormous armies in the field it has had to reintroduce taxation in kind. This move has aggravated peasant unrest; the

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farmers revolt and these revolts further undermine the morale of their sons and brothers in the Kuomintang army. Such problems, however, do not confront the Communists, who fight a patriotic war to defend the new democracy which they have just wrested from feudal reaction, and who live and fight among a people eager to assist.

Since last July the Communists have knocked out 800,000 of Chiang's troops. As early as last January they had seized enough equipment from the Kuomintang to arm 150,000 of their own troops. From July to November, 1946, the Kuomintang was on the offensive. Even in this period the Communists eliminated thirty-nine of Chiang's divisions. The cost was the loss of some big cities. November and December, 1946, marked a period of stalemate during which Chiang was reequipping and regrouping his forces. Already there was a marked difference over the preceding six months. By the close of last year Chiang was no longer able to plan a general, over-all offensive but had to limit himself to planning offensive action in one particular theater. The Communists were not idle during this period either; they managed to eliminate another ten Kuomintang divisions.

Chiang's new offensive came in January, 1947, in Shantung — the peninsula which stretches eastward across the Yellow Sea toward Korea and toward Dairen and Port Arthur at the southern tip of Manchuria. In Shantung lies the great seaport of Tsingtao where the US Navy is preparing a naval establishment for the Kuomintang. The new offensive started off well for Chiang and his American backers with the capture of the Communist center of Lini. But the victory was short-lived and expensive. In one central Shantung battle alone the Communists captured seventeen of Chiang's generals and eight more divisions. Then the Communists hit back and captured the heavily defended city of Taian. Today the battle for Shantung remains unresolved. The Kuomintang, and this is the significant thing, five months after this concentrated offensive started, has yet to gain its objective.

As a matter of fact, even in Shantung the tide has begun to turn. Readers may recall news dispatches two weeks ago which reported that Kuomintang planes had bombed their own troops. This was not so. The Communists had destroyed Chiang's prized 74th Division. The bombing "error" was a Kuomintang camouflage to hide the defeat.

The Communists estimate that the eighteen divisions used by Chiang to capture Yenan (it fell on March 19) were the only ones remaining which he could afford to move from one area to another. With that pyrrhic victory he made the last large shift among his forces that he could risk. From then on a shift of Kuomintang troops anywhere in China has meant an immediate attack by the Communists against the weakened point.

From early winter it was apparent that the war of extermination was not going according to plan. The Kuomintang had boastfully proclaimed that the job of extermination would take three months. The results have been, on the contrary, a substantial reduction in the Kuomintang effectives, a lowering of morale, a significant reduction in Chiang's maneuverability, and most important of all, loss of military initiative. Even the reactionaries could hardly fail to notice that right after the capture of Yenan, at little military cost to the Communists, the Communists hit back and wiped out four of Chiang's divisions in the immediate vicinity, including the highly publicized 135th.

Today there are seven active theaters of war: North Shensi and Shansi (in the northwest), North Honan, Hopei, Shantung (in the north), and the Great Wall and Manchuria (in the northeast). In all of these seven theaters the Communist-led forces are today going over to the offensive. It is on the battlefield that the key decisions for China are being made. And remember, too, that in China also one of the great decisions is being made about the Truman Doctrine.

Americans opposed to the Truman-Hoover-Vandenberg policies have, therefore, a large stake in current Chinese events. There is perhaps no force in Asia or in Western Europe or in the Middle East where the Truman Doctrine is trying to impose itself that is hitting back so hard or so effectively as the Chinese democrats. In the most realistic sense the Chinese people are today making an enormous contribution to the struggle of American democracy. It is high time that American progressives made a more substantial and significant contribution to the decisive struggle of their allies in China.

THE ELEPHANT HAS THIN SKIN

Mounting public criticism of Congress has got the Republicans worried. But their national chairman, Carroll Reece, claims to be unruffled.

By VIRGINIA GARDNER

Washington.

CHAIRMAN CARROLL REECE of the Republican National Committee is inclined to be a little embarrassed, I found, over the touchiness of Republicans who have been irked because some newspapers have been giving a picture of Republicans that's not all rosy. Republican criticism of the press has been most noticeable in the House, which in the 79th Congress passed a chiefly Republican-sponsored "free press" amendment to the UNRRA financing bill banning use of any part of UNRRA allocations by foreign nations which didn't have our notions of a free press. (The amendment was killed in the Senate.) Now we are getting a real idea of what the Republicans mean by a free press.

When I asked Mr. Reece—a smiling gentleman who resembles a daguerrotype more than anything else, with his wavy, graying hair plastered down smoothly—about the Republican complaints of unfairness in the press, he stammered disarmingly. "The—the—the Republicans so far as I've been able to observe are getting a good press," he said. "There are some writers who probably are not with us. Generally speaking, though, they're objective."

I asked him about the May 9 story in the *US News* which declared Re-

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publican leaders were "complaining privately to publishers, to press association heads and to radio officials" and talking vaguely of barring some reporters from press and radio galleries and changing postal rates for newspapers. "In some cases," the same story said, speaking of radio, "where staunchly Republican management was in control of the firms that were employing the commentators, changes have been made."

Mr. Reece fiddled with things on his desk and said he hadn't heard of anything like that. True to his sunny nature, he stuck manfully to the thesis that the people really like the Republicans' program of budget-cutting, labor-hacking, union-pulverizing and Red-baiting. Ignoring what the *US News* called flatly "the slump in party popularity," he explained it this way: "Not in a good many years did we get as good a press as we got during the campaign. Since then, uh, uh," he stumbled a little, "the type of news has changed. Newspapermen generally are fair, though. And I found that all across the country—I just got back from a tour through New England, the West and Northwest—the people are disturbed about the same things which motivated them in the election." The various elections showing Republican upsets he dismissed as insignificant and as due to "local elements."

"Aren't the people disturbed about high prices?" I asked.

With some more hemming and hesitation, Mr. Reece said the people were not paying "the high black market prices" of preelection days.

"Do you actually think people are any more willing to pay high prices if they are not hailed by the press as 'black market' prices?" I asked. Ah, but they had to pay high prices before controls were lifted, he said happily. And weren't they higher now? I asked.

"The present inflation," he said, carefully choosing his words, "is caused in large part by high cost of government and consequent high taxes. This the Republicans are attempting to remedy."

"Really," I said, "I notice you say in your *Republican News* that the President's loyalty probe is still just a 'purge on paper,' for instance. But aren't the very people who commend you for slicing public relations sections of government agencies in appropriations bills, and similarly cutting out New Dealers from jobs, going to be puzzled when the Republicans begin spending a lot to put on publicity men, and filling the payroll with their own men?"

The famous Reece smile burst forth then in all its splendor, and he said coyly, with his characteristic lisp:

"You wouldn't expect 'em to keep the New Dealers on the payroll, would you?" And he simpered delightfully as if he had scored a real point here.

He did not deny, however, that the Republican National Committee is providing publicity men to Congressional committees as a service to the press—and to see that the Republican point of view gets across. As for the newest and fanciest press agent job in Washington, the office of Coordinator of Information for the House of Representatives, he said primly that it wasn't created "for propaganda purposes," but just to be a "convenience for the press," to make information flow smoothly.

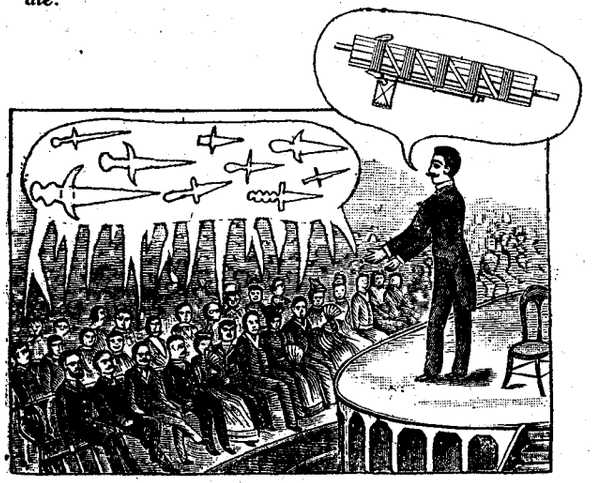
This is the office which the stalwart Republican sheet, the Milwaukee *Journal*, editorialized on thusly: "Well! Well! Look who has gone and hired a press agent. None other than the House of Representatives of the US. Actually, it is the House Republicans who have done the hiring. . . . But the House will foot the bill and Mr. Richardson, the new coordinator, will do all the work of a GOP press agent. . . ."

The *Journal* went on to make light of the Republicans' "sub rosa remarks that the [press] corps is filled with New Dealers, or maybe even Communists," and to advise, ". . . let them quit trying to kid the people."

On Safari with Harari

By Associated Press

In Hamburg, Germany, shouts of protest went up when AFL representative Henry Rutz told 40,000 at a rally that the Soviet Union was "the biggest and worst center of slave labor in the world." Part of the crowd drowned out his next words by singing the *Internationale*.

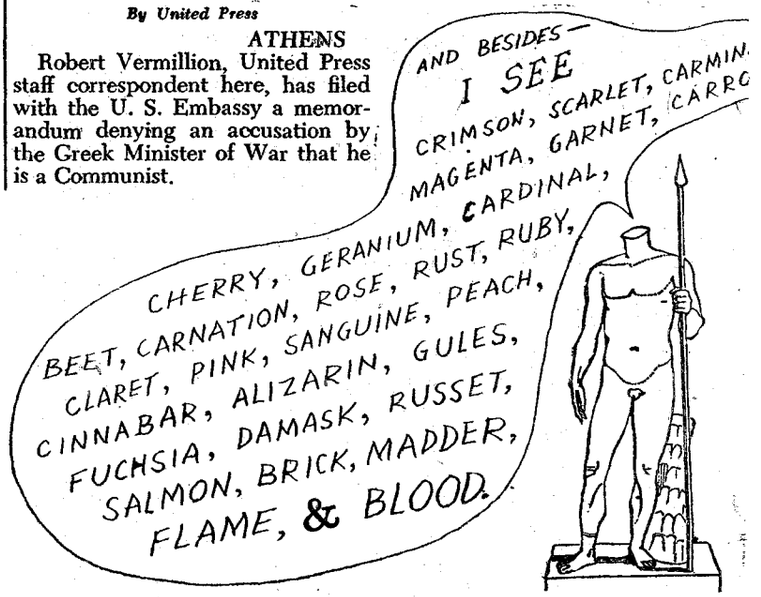


Not Red, Says Vermillion

By United Press

ATHENS

Robert Vermillion, United Press staff correspondent here, has filed with the U. S. Embassy a memorandum denying an accusation by the Greek Minister of War that he is a Communist.



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"To get back to the people across the country you met with, Mr. Reece," I queried, "could you tell me a little more about what they are 'disturbed' about, as you said? Did they seem disturbed about anything other than prices? What did they say—did they seem really concerned about the 'dangers' of communism and worried that more New Dealers and Communists weren't purged?"

Mr. Reece grew solemn, and again rearranged little things on his desk. "About prices, yes, they are concerned," he said, "but also, in consequence, about the things which affect our liberal institutions."

"I don't get that," I said, "our what?"

"They are disturbed about high prices, inflation, and other things that impair our institutions," he said.

"I'm sorry, I don't see how prices —" I began.

"Things which have a long-range effect on our system," he said then, delicately. "Of course, they are looking to the Republican Congress with some degree of confidence and feeling that the program the Congress has outlined will hold the situation in some restraint until the victory can be completed at the polls in 1948."

"But what were some of the questions asked," I said, "by just ordinary people—I take it you must have addressed many people on your tours—which showed their so-called concern over the Reds? Being a Red myself I am sort of interested in just what the people said. Can you think of any questions that showed their thinking?"

"No," he said, stammering a little and moving his chair about and finally rising, "no particular questions."

As for 1948, all he would say was: "I will say this, that I am encouraged that the rank and file are, are—I mean, precinct captains and all the people—actively engaged in working for 1948." Yes, he said in reply to a query about Wallace, "I have heard that Wallace has had good crowds. But," with another coy laugh, "the crowds he draws don't affect our situation much."

The mystery is what causes the Republicans to worry so about the press they are getting, why they are so sensitive. Is the great unity they achieved with the little man in the White House on the policy of "starving communism abroad," as it has been called, and purging New Dealers, liberals and anyone broadly classifying as left-wing at home, falling apart?

There are few signs that they are really afraid of Truman as a power at the polls. Up at the Democratic National Committee, I found no display of over-confidence. There was a cautious appraisal of recent local elections which have on the whole been a setback to Republicans. There was a visible glumness, and no official comment, on the crowds which Henry Wallace has been packing in wherever he went. Both the Republicans and the regular Democrats are taking a peek at these crowds, sneaking a look over a shoulder, and then resolutely turning their backs on them. Wallace is creating uneasiness, a queasiness in the pits of their stomachs, according to some observers close to the scene.

People close to the President are planting the rumor that he will call a special session of Congress to deal with housing and a national health program. Republicans are saying nothing short of war will make them come back once they go home (about July 25). The Republicans are doing what Rep. Vito Marcantonio in a recent radio broadcast said that most Congressmen do: they confuse the press with the people. It isn't that Congress has been slow to act, or done little but talk. The truth is that the more this Congress does the angrier the people are becoming.

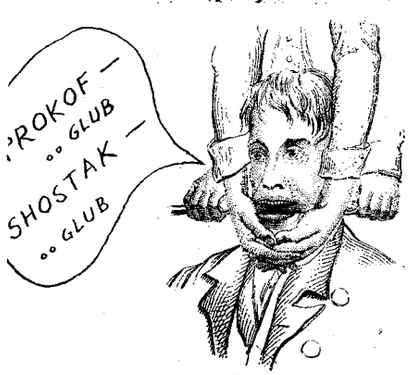
But as the *US News* account of May 9 said frankly, the Republicans "think their program of tax-cutting, budget-slicing and labor regulation is exactly what the voters ordered last November in electing a Republican Congress. In the Republican view, the Congressional Record is good and only the reporting of that record is bad."

Senator Robert A. Taft's press

PM, FRIDAY, MAY 2, 1947

Willis Returns With 'Mouth Shut'

Armond Dare Willis, former cultural officer attached to the U. S. embassy in Moscow, who said last month he quit his job because career Soviet haters dominate our Moscow embassy, arrived home yesterday "under orders to keep my mouth shut."



Senators Vote 15% 'Voluntary' Rent Increases
Herald Tribune
Amendment Allows Rise if Landlord, Tenant Agree. How High Is Up?
I Disagree. To Volunteer. How Low Is Down?
Hanau

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agent, William D. McAdams, told me the record shows that Taft has been getting a better press since he realized that most "smear stories" were just due to being misunderstood and that "what he needed was an explainer."

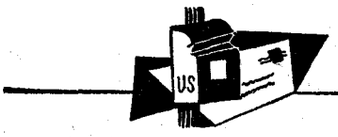
True, he said, "Martin and Halleck were upset," alluding to Speaker Joe Martin and Majority Whip Charles A. Halleck, by some of the press reports, but he didn't think it went so far as to propose barring some reporters and columnists from press galleries. The Senator had no complaints, he said.

"The NEW MASSES is the only one Senator Taft won't see?" I asked, and he said yes, to his knowledge, the only one. I had approached Mr. McAdams and asked whether Senator Taft, who three years ago refused to give me an interview on the basis that I was with NEW MASSES, would change his mind now that he seemed to be making new overtures to the press in general. "Oh, we even see *PM* now," said the hopeful Mr. McAdams, indicating he would do what he could. But he reported back that the Senator still refused.

"The NEW MASSES has always attacked him," he complained. I pointed out that Rep. John Rankin and Senator Taft were the only persons who had refused to see me because I was from NEW MASSES, but he wasn't impressed.

J. Frederick Richardson, the new Coordinator of Information for the House, was just getting established and was too busy to see me, but chatted on the phone briefly. He was indignant that the Milwaukee *Journal* had called him a GOP press agent. "That is wholly incorrect; the resolution setting up the office would bar any such activity," he said. "It's a wholly nonpartisan unit." Did he feel the Republicans had been getting a fair press? "I refuse to feel anything about it," he said. I asked if he were a Republican or Democrat. "Strictly speaking I'm an independent, although I was connected with a Republican organization," he said stiffly. The organization was the National Republican Congressional Committee.

mail call



Hollywood Blues?

TO NEW MASSES: My friends say I am one, if opportunity avails, to always take a sad view of this world, but even I cannot cry in my beer as forlornly as did your correspondent N. A. Daniels in his "Song of Hollywood" in your June 3 issue. The light patter of an otherwise interesting article could not hide a most incorrect appraisal of events here in the Los Angeles-Hollywood community during the days of the Thomas Un-American Committee hearings and the Henry Wallace meeting.

Mr. Daniels gave a real brush-off to one of the most significant political developments on the West Coast in many years. The overpowering gloomy outlook of your correspondent brought him to say that "aside" from the fact 30,000 persons attended the Wallace meeting and the AYD picketed the Un-American Committee nothing was done. I won't go into the fact that scores of West Coast unions have condemned the committee, that *Daily Variety* was forced to write an apologetic editorial critical of the committee and that the general impact on the community was that the committee was getting headlines and no facts. But it seems to me obvious that this community's answer to the Thomas-Rankin Red-baiting was given only two days after the Un-American Committee ended its hearings here when the 30,000 stood cheering and chanting for Wallace and gave Katharine Hepburn a rousing ovation for her fighting speech. The fact that Miss Hepburn, one of the nation's outstanding screen personalities and a star of first magnitude, sharply and forthrightly denounced the Un-American Committee was overlooked by your correspondent.

Also overlooked were the facts that a hatful of stars such as Hedy LaMarr, Edward G. Robinson, Charles Chaplin, John Garfield and writers and other film figures by the score publicly announced contributions of from $100 to $1,000 for the Progressive Citizens of America; that even reactionary Republican Louis B. Mayer felt it necessary to say the film *Song of Russia* was just a love story with a Russian setting, after the Un-American Committee denounced it as Red propaganda; that retired conservative Democratic Congressman Tom Ford said Robert Taylor was guilty of "intellectual dishonesty" for his testimony before the committee. I don't know what more "organized activity" one could want than the meeting of 30,000 people to hear a half-dozen speakers denounce the Un-American Committee. It seems to me your readers ought to know some of these facts so they won't think we've assigned this area of the nation over to the imperialists without even a whimper.

The action of one union leader, before I forget, ought to be mentioned. Emmet Lavery, president of the Screen Writers Guild and a playwright and screenwriter of considerable fame, issued a statement the day after Mr. Thomas left town giving the Un-American Committee its just deserts.

N. A. Daniels mentioned the unsavory presence in this area of Dr. John Lechner, listing him as executive secretary of the grandiloquently-named Motion Picture Alliance for the Preservation of American Ideals. But he failed to mention that two days after the Wallace meeting, where Hepburn denounced the MPA by name, Dr. Lechner was fired from his job. This doesn't indicate the MPA was sorry it was in such bad company, but it does indicate that there was enough "organized activity" around here to get rid of at least one unsightly subject. I'll have to admit, though, that Dr. Lechner's sacking was connected with his indiscreet listing of ten films by *name*, including *Margie, Pride of the Marines* and, believe it or not, *The Best Years of Our Lives*, as films the Thomas committee ought to investigate.

SIDNEY BURKE,
Los Angeles Editor,
Daily People's World.

In fairness to Mr. Daniels it should be mentioned that his report was written prior to the Wallace meeting (the reference to that event was added here in the office). It may be that other positive developments cited by Mr. Burke also took place after the piece was written. At any rate we are happy to hear that the "Song of Hollywood" isn't all the blues.—THE EDITORS.

Help Wanted

TO NEW MASSES: I will greatly appreciate the help of NM readers in locating copies of the following periodicals: *Voice of Labor* for Aug. 15, Sept. 15, Oct. 15 and Nov. 1, 1919; the *New York Communist* for May 8, 15, 24, 31 and June 7, 14, 1919; *Workers' Dreadnaught* for Oct. 4, 1919. Will readers with copies of these issues or with information as to where they may be available communicate with me at NEW MASSES, 104 East 9th Street, New York 3, N. Y.? JOHN STUART.

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review and comment

CHICAGO TRAGEDY

"He wished he could cry, but he couldn't." A story of what society did to Nick Romano.

By JAMES LIGHT

KNOCK ON ANY DOOR, *by Willard Motley. Appleton-Century.* $3.

"KNOCK ON ANY DOOR" is the first novel of a young Negro writer. Set mostly in the South Halsted and West Madison sectors of Chicago, the novel will almost inevitably be compared with such sociological fiction as *An American Tragedy, Studs Lonigan, Never Come Morning* and *Native Son*. It deserves the comparison and is able to stand up under it.

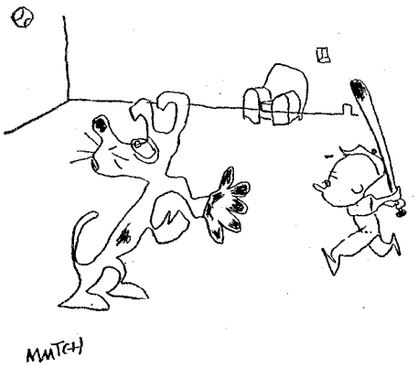
Like all of these, *Knock on any Door* is the story of a character good by nature, but warped by environment and experience; like three of them (only *Studs* is excepted) the novel's main character murders and is captured; like *Native Son* and *An American Tragedy*, a major portion of the novel is concerned with the murder trial, and, through the trial, a social and psychological explanation of the main characters. Like all of them (perhaps Dreiser could be excepted), the story and the major characters embody a problem, and are generated by the problem, rather than by character or action.

The details of Nick Romano's life really begin at twelve—the "prayer age." They carry through, piling one on top of the other, gradually forcing the inevitability of Nick's end, to his death by electrocution at the age of twenty-one. The span between these ages is Nick's life: nine years. It's a short life, yes, but a crowded one, and one with a philosophy: "Live fast, die young, and make a good-looking corpse."

A major element was reform school. There Nick got wised up: got hard, bitter. Especially bitter. It wasn't difficult. He watched the "little kids"—seven to twelve—take a beating, and the emotion came naturally: "He'd never go crawling home asking for forgiveness now. He'd never try to reform now. . . . He knew how men treated boys. And he knew how they reformed them. He hated the law and everything that had anything to do with it." And when Jessie died—killed by authority—that helped too. The bitterness then, though, was inside—deep, not on the surface. "He wished he could cry, but he couldn't."

After the reform school came Chicago—the Chicago of South Halsted, and later, West Madison, the toughest of Chicago streets. It wasn't hard to find the kind of guys Nick knew best—Vito and Butch and Sunshine and Juan. Easy to pick up jackrolling, and playing the "phonies," and using the women for what you could get. Easy, too, to get a gun and do a little robbery.

But easiest of all to nurture the bitterness. Riley helped most of all there: a cop with three notches in his gun,



and in his eyes the urge to add more. But Emma, whom Nick married, helped too. Impotence — engendered by his own guilt in marriage—was a hard thing for Nick to live with; and the guilt, after Emma's suicide, even harder. Nick felt the guilt, knowing the reason for it by instinct alone; and instinct made him place the blame on society, increased his bitterness against social authority.

And, finally there comes, as it has to come, the inevitable murder of Riley, and the third part of Nick's life: the trial. Nick had good friends. There were Grant, the writer-sociologist, who got the lawyer; and Morton, the lawyer; and Owen, the "phony"; and Ang, Nick's brother; and all the West Madison crowd who lied in Nick's defense. They might have saved him, but for one thing: Nick, unknowingly, had to admit his guilt, for only by that could he purge all the other guilts—guilts caused by a society that makes the Nicks of this world what they are.

Yes, the problem has been treated before, just as the story is not new. But the tragedy of Nick is still here—caused by a society in which there must exist some inherent defect. What that defect is Motley doesn't say. He doesn't have to; the reader is able to see and judge and form his own decision. But Motley probes and probes at the result of the defect, until all its evil and rottenness are clearly seen. A writer who does this as truthfully and as memorably as Willard Motley has done it is an important writer. *Knock on any Door* is an extremely important work.

Midas World

AURELIEN, *by Louis Aragon. Translated by Eithne Wilkins. Duell, Sloan & Pearce.* $6.

ARAGON's hero is, in one sense, like Aragon himself when he began writing this novel toward the end of 1940 after his service in the French Army: he is a man dominated by memories of a war. Aurelien Leurtillois at the age of thirty is tall, good-looking, rich; and yet, although in 1922 his military service is three years behind him, he has neither lived nor loved. For three years since World War I he has been a drifter, dawdling through a series of casual misalliances with women. Never able "to shake off the tomorrow-we-die attitude of the war years," he lives from day to day. He is haunted by a line from Racine which seems to characterize his own

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life: "I tarried long, a wanderer, in Caesarea." Always at the back of his mind is the feeling "that he had been beaten, thoroughly beaten by life. Nor was it any use reminding himself: 'But, damn it all, *we* won this war!' "

Aurelien, as the reader will soon suspect, is more than an individual figure: he is also a representative one, symbolizing an era. It is, in fact, just the recognition of what he stands for that brings the action of Aragon's novel to its turning point. This recognition, breaking as a sudden insight into the mind of Aragon's heroine — "a glimpse of a whole world and the abyss that it meant for her" — reveals Aurelien as a man who carries a world in his mind. "No man is alone. All that he thinks and feels is made up of what that world thinks and feels, the world he has living in his mind; all his ideas are other people's ideas, the outlook of his family, his friends and acquaintances and the people who don't matter, including the charwoman."

Aurelien's world is of course the world which was, in less than two decades, to go down in defeat. It is the world of a corrupt ruling class whose one end in life is the possession of riches. (The very choice of the name Aurelien, with its connotation of something golden, is perhaps symbolic; and one of the novel's climactic scenes is the masquerade ball of the Duc de Valmondois where everything, from the gilded decor to the gilded costumes, is coated with gold.) The scene is Paris: the Paris of bought politicians and their buyers, of money-grasping artists on the lookout for rich patrons, of prostitutes and panders. This is a world in which everything is bought and sold—fame, social position and, especially, love. It is seen at the beginning of its brief and shoddy triumph and again, in the novel's epilogue, at the point of its downfall in 1940, when its futile figures are united only *in defeat*.

Through the murk of this cynical environment, like a ray of hope, unexpectedly shines the possibility of salvation. For the first time Aurelien—this "wanderer in Caesarea . . . a stone town that one could walk about in all night long without believing dawn could ever come"—falls in love. He falls in love with the most unlikely of women, one not very beautiful, or chic, or even witty; the country cousin of his rich friends, the Barbentanes, a provincial druggist's wife. Her name is Berenice, the name of the heroine of Racine's play from which comes the line that haunts him: "I tarried long . . ." She in turn falls in love with him. For a short time the ray of hope shines; then it is extinguished forever. Aurelien remains unchanged, his petty-minded masculine chauvinism toward women unshaken; and so does Berenice, whose horror of imperfection makes it impossible for her to accept Aurelien as he is.

Almost twenty years later, in the midst of another war, they meet again to find that they have nothing in common but the memory of an illusion—and yet that illusion still means more to them than anything else in their lives.

Against this picture of an ill-fated attempt at love for love's sake, Aragon counterposes a variety of vignettes which show us other kinds of love as it is practiced in Aurelien's world. There is the "love" of the cynical ladies' man who has married for money, Edmond Barbentane, and of his tortured wife, Blanchette, who first tries suicide in her grief over his infidelities and then turns against him with hatred to accept the affections of another man who finds her fortune desirable. There is the very profitable trafficking in "love" of the aging beauty, the actress Rose Melrose, who combines business with pleasure in a sort of ruthless animal abandon; and there is the hangdog suffering from "love" of her cuckolded husband, Dr. Decoeur. There is the "love" which her dead husband's money enables Mary Percival to buy from a pretty young poet half her age; and there is the young poet's puppy-like adoration of Berenice, who mothers him, seeking solace after she has broken off with Aurelien. There is, in fact, almost every kind of love—every kind, that is, except the kind which brings any sense of fulfillment.

Aragon's lovers — and there are many of them, for *Aurelien* is a novel on an ambitious scale, peopled with a vast assortment of characters, running to two volumes, a total of 680 pages—are all but unanimous in their sense of frustration. One cannot help but be struck by the regularity of the repetition with which this theme of dissatisfaction in love is presented, unvaried by any contrast. It is as remarkable as the lack of variation in the characters, who, for all their individual peculiarities, are still nearly all alike in their possession of money and social position. There are only a few exceptions—Aurelien's charwoman, for instance, or the young

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factory worker he meets by accident at a public swimming pool; and it is noteworthy that we get some of our sharpest observations of Aurelien through their eyes. The lack of contrast—which Aragon's previous novels, distinguished by the range of their insights into many levels of society, have not prepared us to expect—results in a curiously muffled effect. Somehow *Aurelien*, despite its wealth of incident, its sensitive evocation of atmosphere and skillful characterization of human types, often with the most penetrating perception of psychological problems, still leaves a total impression incommensurate with the novel's size and scope.

One is left with a strangely muted sense of futility. Perhaps this reaction to the novel as a whole is, more than anything, the reaction provoked by Aurelien himself, its central character, who is so evidently intended to symbolize his whole doomed world. It is very hard to care what becomes of Aurelien, this rich, good-looking young idler who has so little reason for living, and makes so little effort to find any. It is therefore very hard to care either what becomes of his world. In the man, as in his environment, there is such a lack of any principle of resistance that it seems unimportant whether he wins Berenice or not; and Berenice's assertion of that principle is obviously of a kind too idealistic ever to prevail against real obstacles.

One accepts Aurelien as a symbol for that futile and corrupt ruling class whose folly prepared France's fall in 1940.

But Aragon intends a further meaning; he draws a symbolic parallel between Aurelien's loss of the woman he loves and a man's loss of his country. It is a loss which Aurelien accepts without a murmur, having gone down without ever fighting. Aragon's verdict is clear enough: "If he had had to fight his way through life, perhaps he would have found the way to Berenice, or, if not that, then forgetfulness. But living as he did in ease and irresponsibility, he remained in the grip of a spectre, a mere shadow." This, however, is merely to draw a moral from the tale: it cannot compensate for the lack of that sense of conflict, implicit in the development of the story itself, which would make any such moral superfluous. And one finds Aragon seemingly compelled, again and again, to such moralizing, often in the most prolix and rhetorical

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manner: the compulsion appears to be one of the chief reasons for his novel's rather inordinate length.

It was just in those bleak months after the fall of France, when Aragon was writing *Aurelien*, that he was also writing poems—and poems in which, as in *Aurelien*, the loss of a loved human being became a symbol for loss of one's country. It was the kind of symbol which served him as a means to integrate his feelings as an individual and as a member of society—and thus to achieve an intensity of utterance which spoke to others with a sense of passionate affirmation. For these poems were, above all, affirmative even when they expressed the deepest grief. *Aurelien* fails to reach the level of affirmation. Why, one can only guess. How can one know whether this failure simply reflects the bleakness of the period in which the novel was written, when the Resistance had not yet mustered its forces—or whether it shows the influence of a literary tradition which may still weigh too heavily on Aragon: the naturalistic tradition of a Zola, who saw human beings too exclusively as the helpless pawns of blind social forces? In any case, one cannot help noticing that in the poems of this period Aragon seems to have come closer to the truth than in his present novel—or at least to that kind of truth which seeks not merely to interpret reality, but rather to change it. By resorting more boldly to the poet's imaginative grasp of possibility and relying less on a static scrutiny of actuality, it seems possible that Aragon might have made of *Aurelien* a better novel.

WALTER MCELROY.

Books Received

THE HIDDEN DAMAGE, *by James Stern. Harcourt, Brace.* $4. A graphic account of a postwar trip through Germany, with some sharp insights into the character of diverse segments of the German people.

THE NINE YOUNG MEN, *by Wesley McCune. Harper.* $3.50. Sketches of the Supreme Court and its last ten years of judges and decisions. By the author of THE FARM BLOC. McCune is now on *Time* magazine.

20TH CENTURY CONGRESS, *by Estes Kefauver and Dr. Jack Levin. Duell, Sloan & Pearce.* $3. A plea for the reorganization of Congress for more efficient operation and better government. Includes a study of the anachronistic forms and methods prevalent at the present time in the Capitol.

EL GRECO, *by Maurice Legendre. Hyperion*

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Press and *Duell, Sloan & Pearce.* $6. A reprint of an essay by the director of the Casa Velasquez in Madrid, accompanied by sixteen reproductions in full color and more than fifty black-and-whites. Neither essay nor reproductions are exceptional, though the essay is much less useful.

GUAM AND ITS PEOPLE, *by Laura Thompson. Princeton.* $5. An exhaustive study of post-war Guam has been added to this reprint of the standard work on the island, which appeared in 1940.

PETER BRUEGEL. *Touchstone Press.* $1. Ten reproductions of Bruegel's work including "Never Never Land," "Justice," "The Downfall of the Magician." From original engravings in the Metropolitan. Suitable for framing.

FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT. Selections from his writings, *edited by Philip S. Foner. International.* 40¢. A cross-section of the late President's policies and views on the major problems before the country during his administration.

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THE Gielgud production of *Love For Love* is exquisite. Its perfectly attuned, mannered and mincing acting is as flawless as its gracefully bawdy dialogue, which Congreve never once fumbles. Here is confirmation for today's theater-goers of Congreve's position as the master of Restoration comedy and, perhaps, the keenest wit in English literature.

The plot of *Love For Love* turns, with half a dozen love affairs pivoting on the same point, on the transfer of a large inheritance. The hero, to further stretch that elastic title, is a young gentleman wastrel who has run into debt and whose father offers to help him out with a cash payment if he relinquishes his inheritance rights. The prospect of the transfer of those rights, first to a seafaring second son and then to prospective issue of a second marriage by the father, draws an adventuress into the game. It provokes other manifestations of the legalized harlotry which often follows when money and marriage mix. The corruption of upper-class love, in which inheritance is the most sacred human right and deceit the chief accomplishment, have seldom been so thoroughly and wittily as well as bawdily exposed.

Virtue — that is, the gentleman's right of inheritance — triumphs. All ends well for the gentleman, wastrel though he be.

Love For Love is an expose despite, rather than by, the intention of the author. To Congreve the vices he exposed were incidental and natural. His real concern was for the right of inheritance, without which no gentleman could make a career of being a gentleman. *Love For Love* is thus an example of the social function of literature independent, as it often is, of the predilections and aims of the author.

That for Congreve the vindication of the rights of inheritance is a just cause is made clear in the play. Its action is so plotted as to give the upper-class audiences, which Pepys has so eloquently described, a satisfying catharsis as the son wins fortune and lady and the father who would have disinherited him is left gulled and ridiculous. If the evidence in the play itself were not sufficient Congreve's own life supplements and corroborates it.

We know that Congreve preferred to be thought of as a gentleman rather than as a writer, astonishing Voltaire by this repudiation of the talent that had given him distinction and might have given him influence, as the purposeful exercise of his own talent had given Voltaire influence all across the European continent. To Congreve that was a vulgar ambition.

Congreve's literary career was one of the shortest as well as most brilliant in English literary history. At the age of thirty he gave it up, writing virtually nothing thereafter, living out his remaining twenty-nine years in the decorative indolence arranged for gentlemen through government sinecures.

Yet Congreve's retirement had another explanation than the serenity of idleness and the pleasures of society. Other gentlemen authors, among them Walton and Donne, had scorned to be thought of as professional writers, yet had continued writing. And Congreve's own life had its pains: gout, which probably had neurotic accompaniments, and blindness.

About the time of the production of *Love For Love*, or shortly after, Jeremy Collier, an English dissenter clergyman—one of those who were voicing the new tastes as well as the new interests of the rising capitalist class—published a pamphlet "against the Profaneness and Immorality of the

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English Stage." It attacked Shakespeare and Dryden as well as the young Restoration wits. It was crude but confident, vibrating with the consciousness of the power of the rising money-men. One of its passages indignantly upheld the "rich citizen" against the gibes of the "fine gentleman."

Collier's pamphlet had a paralyzing effect on the Restoration writers. Many of them wrote defenses against it, but with the shaken reasoning of those trembling in the presence of a new power. Even the aged and honored Dryden's reply was an apologia.

Congreve's retirement, which followed the comparative failure of his next, last and greatest play, *The Way of the World*, appears to be another sort of answer to Jeremy Collier, the answer of passive protest. As this sort of protest only too often does, it proved self-destructive. Whether intended or not, his retirement led a general retreat. The Restoration comedy withered away.

Collier's blast was the storm wind that blows in a change of intellectual weather. There followed the decorous and synthetic classicism of which Addison was the most representative example and Samuel Johnson the most vociferous. This, thinned down to the "genteel," was, unhappily, the most enduring part of America's cultural heritage from Great Britain.

Within its own social context a play like *Love For Love* has meanings that have since vanished. It reaches us today as a vivid and witty indictment of the corruptions of a privileged class. ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

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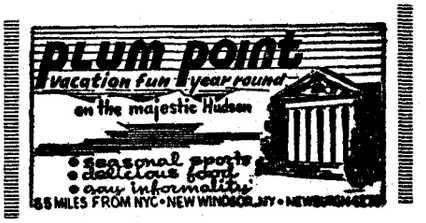
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ca" aria; Adam Didur's unsurpassed bass in two Mozart selections. The rarer items, mostly taken off cylinders, suffer necessarily from more hollow tone and cut music. They are of great historical and stylistic interest, however, and include the legendary Van Rooy in two Wagner selections; Sammarco in lively performances of the Figaro aria and a Danizetti air; Ancona's velvety voice in the same Donizetti air and a selection from "Huguenots"; Caruso's lyric voice of 1903, in an Italian song. Records of Cissie Loftus, Lillian Russell and Rudolph Valentino have interest only as curiosities.

It is a pleasure to report two good jazz albums. "New Orleans Jazz" by Kid Ory's Creole Band presents blues, rags, hymn tunes, spirituals and Creole songs, all authentic jazz sources, within the framework of the New Orleans march. With Ory's driving tailgate trombone, Bigard's singing clarinet, and fine ensemble playing, the music can't help but be exciting (Columbia 126). "South Side Shake" displays Dan Burley, editor of *The Amsterdam News*, in the role of a house party pianist. It is fine, authentic folk blues and stomp music, not as complex as the best jazz piano, but its sonorities solidly filled out by Billy Taylor's bass and the McGhee brothers' two guitars (Circle S3).

Susan Reed in her second volume of "Folk Songs and Ballads" offers old Irish, English and American mountain tunes, including the familiar "Danny Boy" and the great "Greensleeves," affectingly sung (Victor 1107). The dancer Corinne Chochem has sponsored free arrangements of Jewish folk songs and dances, by several leading contemporary composers, the results of which are presented in two albums, "Palestine Dances" (Vox 191) and "Jewish Holiday Dances" (Vox 192). The folk beauty is preserved, with the added composer personality, ranging from the tenderness of Eisler and Toch to the gay wit of Milhaud. Both worthwhile, the first is a better single choice.

Disc offers two extremes of jazz. An album of Lonnie Johnson's blues singing and guitar playing, with piano by John Davis, is in the fine old folk blues tradition. Two arrangements by Mary Lou Williams, "Lonely Moments" and "Whister's Blues," are sensitive jobs in the modern chromatic textures, performed by the Orent-Roth orchestra.

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